

ideal for agriculture, the village also had brickmakers, steam pump works, cabinet making, and saw mills, just to name a few. Today, Upper Sandusky continues its tradition of being a rich agricultural and industrial center.

Even more important than the growth of commerce has been Upper Sandusky's tradition of community based values. Much of this can be attributed to early German Irish immigrants to the area who trusted in God and esteemed ones family. I know the positive effects of a small town that values each of its citizens. There is a feeling of security and reassurance that comes from calling your community your home; a place where your neighbors, classmates, coworkers are not only your friends, but become an extension of your family. Continuing to develop in an enriching environment, I have no doubt that Upper Sandusky will prosper for another 150 years.

#### CONGRATULATING THE BUEHLER CHALLENGER AND SCIENCE CENTER

#### HON. MARGE ROUKEMA

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 15, 1998*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to draw the attention of my colleagues to the Buehler Challenger and Science Center in Paramus, New Jersey. This is a highly educational facility that provides excellent hands-on learning opportunities for thousands of young people. It is a wonderful example of how to make learning fun!

The Buehler Challenger and Science Center was dedicated September 6, 1994. It is a mockup of the NASA space shuttle and its control centers and allows students who dream of the stars to come as close to space flight as they can without leaving the ground. In the process, it teaches a myriad of lessons about science, math, thinking, problem-solving, teamwork and self-confidence.

The center is named for Emil Buehler, an aviation pioneer whose experience ranged from the biplanes and dogfights of World War I to the beginnings of the shuttle program before his death in 1983.

This center presents the young people of New Jersey with a taste of the many challenges in science and technology that await them as we enter the 21st Century. The children who visit this center will see advances in science and technology during their lifetimes we cannot begin to imagine. Our children are our future and this center helps ensure their future is a bright one.

Students who have taken the Buehler center's "fantastic voyage" are transported into a whole new world. And, like astronauts returning from space, they bring back with them invaluable knowledge about themselves and the world around them. This knowledge will help them aim for the stars as they pursue new heights in math, science and technology.

Inspiring children through facilities such as this is essential to initiate and maintain interest in technology among our young people to enable them to meet the demands of citizens will face in the next century. This is essential to maintain our position in the global economy of the future.

Unfortunately, but true, many children decide as early as elementary school that they

have no interest in science. Too many believe they can't "do" science or that math is "too hard." The result, according to some estimates, is that America will have a shortage of half a million chemists, biologists, physicists and engineers by the year 2000. The Challenger Center is helping reverse that trend. Fortunately, these same students are fascinated by space subjects, especially astronauts. This unique, hands-on experience can raise students' expectations of success, foster in them a long-term interest in math and science, and motivate them to pursue careers in these fields.

It is only natural that the Challenger Center can be a way to reach students uncertain about science. Since the inception of the space program, NASA and the nation's education system have traveled parallel paths. They share the same goals—exploration, discovery, the pursuit of new knowledge and the achievement of those goals is interdependent. NASA depends on the education system to produce a skilled and knowledgeable work force. The education community, in turn, has used the space program to motivate and encourage students to study science, engineering and technology.

If the United States is to remain at the forefront of space science and aerospace technology and research, then we must provide students with the skills they will need in a highly complex and technical workplace. The next generation of science and technology achievements can only be as good as the education and challenges we give our children in those subjects today.

The children who visit this center today could easily turn out to be the scientists of tomorrow. Who knows what discoveries they will make or new technologies they will develop? Their work could be as dramatic as the airplane was to our grandparents or the space shuttle to us.

Even for those who don't enter the world of science, this center offers an insight into the technological world around them. If we think it's vital to be computer literate today, imagine the skills that will be required in another generation.

An important aspect of this challenge to learn is that some believe the United States is no longer challenged. With the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, we no longer have the type of outside challenge that pushed us to the moon. Remember, it was the insult and shock of Sputnik that led President Kennedy to launch the space program.

If we are not to be challenged by another nation, we must challenge ourselves. We must make a commitment to go where no one has gone before, to explore and learn and never be satisfied that there are no challenges left to meet.

Today I'd like to challenge our young people to continue the record of meeting challenges that our nation has exhibited in the past. The Buehler Center is part of the highway to a future where the American thirst for knowledge will keep our nation the world's leader in science and technology.

THE U.S. AND PANAMA BEYOND 1999

#### HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 15, 1998*

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, over the July Fourth district work period some very disturbing and disheartening news reached us regarding negotiations between the United States and Panama as to the presence of the United States in Panama beyond 1999. And now, our State Department is about to inform the Government of Panama that talks may just be over. This could be a mistake and both sides should agree to take a time out and enter into a cooling off period.

As my colleagues know, next year, on December 31, 1999, the Panama Canal Zone will be turned over to Panamanian control and all United States forces are to withdraw from that nation. However, for over a year, the United States and the Government of Panama, largely at the suggestion of the Panamanian President, Perez Balladares, have been negotiating a compromise which would permit a limited number of U.S. military personnel to remain in Panama.

The negotiations were over the creation of a new multinational anti-narcotics center which would be located at the Howard Air Force Base. Under the agreement, which was largely completed last January, some 2,000 U.S. military personnel would be permitted to remain in Panama to staff the center which would provide regional air surveillance, intelligence information and direct counter-narcotics assistance to nations participating in the center. At the time, there was a good deal of optimism expressed by both sides that the agreement would satisfy each nation's specific needs. Panama would see the end of U.S. control of the Canal and would gain what it considered its final and total national sovereignty. The U.S. would retain a presence in Panama while not appearing to be retaining a strictly defined military base. For the United States, the retention of a small military profile in Panama would allow us to maintain our commitment to the preservation of democracy and stability in Central America and to continue the fight against the drug trade essentially in region. For Panama, the continued presence of U.S. personnel would serve as a confidence builder for foreign investors and those concerned over the future security of the canal.

Interestingly, Panamanian public opinion seemed to favor such an agreement for largely the same reasons.

Unfortunately, and despite the initial optimism, the agreement now appears to be in serious jeopardy as both sides seem to be having difficulty deciding what it is they really want. The Government of Panama, for its part, can't seem to make up its mind as to whether it really wants a continued U.S. presence beyond 1999 or for that matter, a counter-drug center on its territory. All of this is wrapped around internal political and Presidential politics with President Perez Balladares unable to determine whether such a center helps or hurts his standing within his own political party and whether it hurts or helps his reelection chances.

The United States, for its part, cannot seem to decide whether it wants a military base or